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SOME INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF MOSES.

No part of the world has a history so singular and so mysterious as Egypt. None is known to have been the source of so much that distinguishes man as an intellectual being. Although the literature which exemplified the accomplishments of her early ages has been lost, or only detached fragments of it remain, yet the genius of modern enterprise has made discoveries among her buried ruins, and in the sculptures on her monumental piles, which clearly place her in the front rank of all the nations of antiquity by whom science and the arts were cultivated and advanced. Still, so long a time has elapsed since her glory departed and she became a land of darkness, that it is scarcely possible now to draw a picture of her as she was when Homer went thither to catch the inspiration of song, and Pythagoras and Plato to learn the secrets of philosophy; much less at that far earlier day when the children of Israel were oppressed by her kings, and Moses went from Midian to deliver them from their bondage. Nearly all our knowledge of the earlier of these periods is gleaned from the scanty records of the Bible. Our work, however, in the inquiries now before us, does not relate to Egypt in *general*, but *particularly* to the descendants of Jacob in Egypt.

Joseph, the favorite son of Jacob, whose remarkable career has passed under review in a previous number, died at the age of one

hundred and ten years. His remains were embalmed and placed in a coffin, — an honor accorded in that early age only to persons of distinction. Before his death, relying religiously on the promise that had been made to Abraham that the land of Canaan should be the possession and dwelling-place of the posterity of that patriarch, he solemnly assured his brethren that God would visit them to bring them back into the country of their fathers, and bound them by an oath to carry up his bones with them when they should go.

Time passes. All the brethren of Joseph die; but their descendants increase rapidly. The little one becomes a thousand. The land is filled with them, insomuch that the king is alarmed lest they may come to excel in number and strength his own people, and, in case of a war, turn against him and redeem themselves. When they came into Egypt, they numbered but seventy souls. At the end of a little more than two hundred years, they had increased to two hundred thousand *men*, besides women and children, — their total census probably amounting to not far from *three million* souls! This may strike the reader as almost incredible; but, if he will compare the ratio of this increase with that of the descendants of the Pilgrims in our own country, all surprise will cease. So large a population, of a foreign race, and in a servile condition, not friendly, of course, to the power that oppressed them, capable, by insurrection or by joining themselves to hostile invaders, of greatly disturbing, if not of overthrowing the government, would naturally excite the suspicions and fears of the king, and put him upon the adoption of measures either for spreading them over a wider extent of country, and so weakening their power, as is the policy in the United States, or else for preventing their future increase. The latter course was that adopted by him. After having subjected them to a more rigorous treatment, under task-masters, than they had ever experienced before, — to take the heart out of them, so that they could not rebel, — he gave orders to have every male child that should be born destroyed at its birth; and though the cruel decree failed to be enforced because those who were expected to execute it recognized a *higher law* than the will of the king, or, as the Scripture expresses it, "because they *feared* God," yet there is no doubt that it created great alarm in the breasts of all Hebrew parents. Another decree followed, that every male infant be cast into the

river and drowned. When, therefore, a son was born, parents wishing to preserve his life were obliged to conceal the fact of his birth by every artifice they could devise. Of the many expedients resorted to, an account of one is handed down to us which is very original and interesting. It is probable that others equally remarkable were adopted, and that this alone was recorded because the life saved by it was one to which not the Hebrews only, but the world, are indebted. We refer, of course, to that of the mother of *Moses*. And, as *Moses* fills so large a space in the book of God's revelations; as he acted so conspicuous a part in forming the character and deciding the destiny of the Jewish people; as indeed, next to the Messiah, he is now venerated by Christians as the first of lawgivers and the greatest of prophets, — it is proper that we should trace, even with some minuteness of detail, the story of his life, from its singular infancy to its sublime termination.

Among the sons of Jacob was one who bore the name of *LEVI*, a name renowned afterwards as the head of a tribe, and that tribe set apart from all others as the one from which alone the priestly office should for ever be filled. Of the children of *LEVI*, one was named *KOHATH*; and to him were born four sons, one of whom was called *AMRAM*. This *AMRAM*, then, was the grandson of *LEVI*. He united himself in marriage with a sister of his father (who was born after the family came into Egypt); and three children, who acquired a world-wide and everlasting fame, were the fruit of that marriage, namely, *AARON*, *MOSES*, and *MIRIAM*. Thus *MOSES*, the immediate subject of this notice, was the third in descent from *LEVI*, or his *great-grandson*. The Scriptures do not enable us to fix with precision the date of his birth. It is commonly placed at about fifteen hundred and seventy years before Christ. At this period, there commenced a new dynasty in Egypt, led by Amosis, or Ames, from Thebes. Belonging to that distant province, he probably knew but little of the Hebrews, and, from habit, regarded them with that distrust and contempt in which the Egyptians usually held foreigners. Under the former dynasty, the privileges which had been secured to them through the influence of Joseph were respected, and they were allowed, on certain conditions, to occupy and improve the whole of the fertile district of Goshen; but, on the accession of the Theban prince, — “the king who knew not Joseph,” who

recognized no obligations resulting from the former position and influence of Joseph in the court of Pharaoh, — these privileges were taken away; the most rigorous exactions were imposed upon them, and they were reduced to a state of complete servitude. In addition to these oppressions, the bloody decree, before alluded to, concerning the male children that should be born in their families, was issued, that the cup of their sorrow might be filled to the brim. Under these circumstances of oppression and terror in his family, and amongst all the people allied to him by blood, MOSES was born. He was a "goodly child," we are told in the Scripture, and the Talmuds exceed all bounds of reason in their descriptions of his beauty. But now that he is in the world, and "the powers that be" are seeking the young child's life, what is to be done? Shall that fond *mother* give him up to the prowling emissaries of the inhuman king? Shall that doating *father* observe such respect for the government under which he lives as to resign his infant son, without an effort to save him, to the fate which it has ordained? No! Parental instincts are too strong for *that*. The love of offspring is stronger than the love of government, and humanity is a deeper and holier sentiment than loyalty! That child must, somehow, be saved. *How* shall it be done? Three months the parents managed to conceal him from the spies; but, after that, it becomes necessary for them to adopt some new plan for preserving his life, and the well-known expedient, which proved successful, was resolved on. A daughter of the king — married, but childless, it is supposed — is accustomed to resort to the river near by for bathing. Has not the mother of Moses often seen her, with her attendants, repairing to that spot? And has she not observed a gentle and loving expression on her face? And can she not trust that woman's heart? Will not the beautiful boy, whom she now clasps to her bosom (if the princess shall once look upon him), excite her compassion, and move her affections? She will try, at any rate. A basket is prepared, water-proof; the babe is laid in it, and just there where the princess is sure to pass, — in the edge of the river among the rushes, — it is placed. Little Miriam, the sister of the babe, is left not far off to watch the progress of things, while the mother withdraws out of sight. As was expected, the cradle among the flags is discovered by the princess; and, as was hoped, she directs that it should be brought to her. On opening it, the child awakes

and cries, and so moves her compassion. Little Miriam — well instructed beforehand, no doubt — is instantly on the spot, and offers to run and procure a nurse for the child, if the princess wishes. She is directed to go; and immediately, behold! the mother of Moses is under pay from the daughter of Pharaoh for nursing her own son! The device has succeeded admirably. It was skilful; it was innocent; in its results it was immensely important: for Moses was thereby adopted into the royal family, and, in consequence of *that*, was educated “in all the learning of the Egyptians,” and fitted to be the leader of his people.

By such singular and unexpected *turns of fortune* is Almighty God often pleased to make evident his supremacy over human affairs, and to achieve his most comprehensive and beneficent purposes.

Such was the reception which the world gave to the founder of the Jewish State and the Mediator of the Old Covenant, — not much more kind and hospitable than that of the Mediator of the New Covenant, whose birthplace was a stable, and whose parents were compelled to flee from their country in his infancy, that they might preserve his life from the bloody hand of the reigning power that sought to take it.

Of the childhood and youth of Moses, history is even more silent than concerning those portions of the life of Jesus. The Muse leaps over them, as if impatient to busy herself in the strange, solemn, and supremely momentous events of his subsequent years. That he was brought up, however, in the house of Pharaoh, and enjoyed every advantage which a condition so elevated is able to confer, — taught in the best schools, admitted to the higher mysteries, and accustomed to the society of the wealthiest and noblest in the land, — is universally conceded. But, amid all these splendid opportunities, he forgets not the comparative humbleness of his origin, but feels himself drawn by powerful affinities towards his abused family and kindred; as the escaped slave of America, educated and eloquent, admitted to the sumptuous hospitalities of the French and English capitals, forgets not his “brethren in bonds,” but yearns towards them with perpetual sighings for their redemption. At length, when he had reached the full strength of all his faculties, — when the ungoverned enthusiasm of youth, according to the common course of nature, had subsided, at the age of forty years, having gone out into the

neighborhood where his brethren dwelt, — his strong sympathy for them broke forth in an act which separated him for ever from the house of Pharaoh, and, in its effect, bound his destiny indissolubly to theirs. His heart had been moved deeply by observing the grievous burdens that were imposed upon his race; and, in this state of feeling, it chanced to him to espy an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren! His noble nature could not brook such an outrage. Though calm and meek in temperament, this sight kindled the fire of indignation in his breast; and, under the influence of that passion, though not without deliberation, he approached and killed the Egyptian, and buried his body in the sand! Now, the morality of Christ, nay, the morality of his own code, would not justify that act. In the view of both, it was a technical crime, at least. Yet who does not recognize in it that spirit of abhorrence of injustice and inhumanity which the law and the gospel conspire to form? Who does not see underneath it the workings of a noble and disinterested nature? Who has not a deeper respect for Moses, in consequence of it, than would be felt if he had stood patiently by, and witnessed the cruelty inflicted on his brother, without an attempt to redress it? So that there are cases in which crime assumes almost the dignity of virtue, and disobedience to the *letter* of a law becomes the truest homage to its *spirit*! Soon the criminal act of Moses, though, as he thought, seen by no mortal eye, is bruited, and the knowledge of it reaches the ear of the king, — not the same king, however, whose daughter brought him up, but his successor. It is a crime to be punished with death; and, in order to avoid the penalty, Moses flees from Egypt into Midian, and there, by a slight adventure, in which the same trait which appeared in the slaying of the Egyptian is again manifested, he is immediately established in the family of one who united in himself the offices of priest and prince of that country. The adventure was this: — As he was taking rest near a well, the daughters of the prince came, according to the custom of those primitive times, to draw water for their father's flocks. While thus engaged, they were rudely assailed by certain shepherds, who would have driven them away. Moses, with a strong sense of justice and a becoming gallantry, springs forth for their protection, and helps them water their flock. This act of courage and kindness is reported by the damsels to their father, who immediately sends for the stranger, and receives him

into his house. There Moses finds a pleasant home, and there he is content to dwell. There are seven daughters in the family, one of whom, named Zipporah, in due time Moses makes his wife. Thus he is apparently established for the rest of his life. From being the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, he has become the son-in-law of the pastoral prince of Midian; and there, amid rural scenes and occupations, in comparative solitude and obscurity, the years of his life glide away so evenly, so void of incidents, as to leave nothing of them to be recorded. Near forty years pass thus quietly with him; but, with his poor brethren in Egypt, these are years of stern *hardship* and *oppression*.

And now a change awaits this Hebrew exile, — a change greater than any that has ever taken place in his experience, — a change which presents him to the world in a new character and office, and connects his name, as that of no other before him is connected, with the everlasting God. We are approaching now, as we follow his footsteps, the epoch of a divine revelation. We are on the borders of that "holy ground," in the awful shadow of that mountain, where it pleased God to commence those communications to Moses which were continued from time to time till the whole law was promulgated. The series of facts now lying immediately before us are, many of them, miraculous in their nature, as all facts designed to foreshadow or to betoken a direct communication from God must be.

And here it is the fit place to observe, that it is not the great facts themselves against which doubts and objections commonly arise, but only some of their incidents. Around a central and undisputed fact there gather many details; and if, in some instances, these task our faith too far, that should not, and does not, shake the credibility of the fact itself. We can believe the fact, though we may not be always able to admit the incidents; and the fact is the *only thing essential to be believed*. Take as an example the resurrection of Jesus. From being dead in the sepulchre, he became living: "he came forth *alive*." That is the great fact believed in by the disciples. But whether the stone was rolled away from the door by a visible hand, — whether one or two angels appeared to Mary, or none at all, — whether Jesus went to Emmaus, and returned that same evening, are questions relating to incidents in reference to which doubt may be harmless. Let us bear this canon in mind, as we go on to notice the events

of glory and grandeur in which Moses is now called to bear so conspicuous a part.

When nigh eighty years of age, as he leads the flock of Jethro into the green pastures around the base of Horeb, he is surprised by seeing on the mountain a *flame of fire* issuing from the midst of a bush, the bush remaining wholly unconsumed. How came the fire there? And of what sort is it that it does not burn? His wonder is fully awakened. He will not pass on till he has examined this strange phenomenon. As he approaches it with curious dread, he hears a voice twice calling his own name, "Moses, Moses!" apparently issuing from the midst of the flame; to which he makes instant response, "Here am I." The Voice continues, — and never on earth was any thing more divinely solemn heard, — "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Silent, reverent, awe-struck, he stands listening; and the Voice proceeds: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses is filled with consternation, and hides his face, not daring to look upon God. But God has in very deed appeared unto him, spoken to him. This he knows full well; and the awful fact makes the deepest impression on his mind, and gives a coloring to his whole life. Yes, *God* has spoken to him! He has heard the divine *Voice*! and he shall hear it again in Sinai and Horeb before he rests from his labors. But wherefore this manifestation? The Lord does not leave him in doubt. A great work is to be done, and Moses is to do it. "I have surely seen," saith the Voice, "the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their task-masters, and I know their sorrows. . . . Now, therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me. . . . Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayst bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." This, then, is the object of the divine communication, — the appointment of Moses to lead the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt. No wonder he is oppressed with amazement, and knows not what to think or how to answer. No wonder he almost distrusts his own convictions, and seeks to pry deeper into the nature of the divine personage before him. "Art thou the very God? What is thy name, O thou mysterious Voice? Who shall I tell my brethren

thou art, who commandest me to go and redeem them?" Then the name which is the Lord's memorial unto all generations, "I AM THAT I AM," — the name which denotes Being, Sovereign, Absolute, Unchangeable, Self-sustained, — is pronounced, and the direction given: "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you!"

But Moses has no confidence in himself. He feels that he possesses no qualifications for an enterprise so gigantic and so difficult. But God knows him better than he knows himself; and therefore, while giving him special instructions as to the manner in which he should proceed, he assures his faith by showing him that he has clothed him with supernatural powers, and that these cannot fail him, though his own strength might. This he does by the simple means of the rod which Moses carried in his hand. He tells him to cast it on the ground: he does so, and it becomes a serpent. He bids him take it up: he does so, and it is a rod again in his hand. The rod is thenceforth the symbol of divine power in his hand; and, when he lifts it up in the sight of the Hebrews, they shall believe that God has appeared unto him. By this, and by other miraculous signs, the heart of Moses is made willing to accept the great trust to which God had called him; and not the least of the comforts he received, in the midst of his doubts and solitudes, was the assurance that his brother Aaron should be his partner in the toil and the triumph of Israel's redemption. It is unnecessary to relate the various incidents, comparatively unimportant, which diversified the period between his acceptance of the trust and the commencement of the duty which it required of him. These are told so briefly by the sacred writer that it is hardly possible for us to form a just appreciation of them, and we rise from their perusal well satisfied that they are not at all necessary to our edification.

We have seen Moses on the mount receiving his charge from the voice of God. We have seen his hesitations, his misgivings, his fears, all at length overcome. We are now to behold him, with Aaron his brother, as it were, the human arm of God rescuing Israel from their long oppressions. The two brothers arrive in Egypt. They lose no time, but instantly call a meeting of the "elders," or chief men of the Hebrews, and lay before them an account of the commission they had received from Jehovah, and of the plan they had been directed to pursue in fulfilment of it.

They also showed them the miraculous signs they had been authorized to use to convince both their brethren and the king. And what is their success in this opening measure? All that they could desire. Their word is believed by the elders. They express no doubt. They are fully convinced that the Lord has visited the children of Israel, and had looked upon their affliction; and, being thus satisfied, "they bowed their heads and worshipped." But a more difficult task is before them now. It is something to have gained the acquiescence and co-operation of the Hebrew elders: it will be much more to secure the consent of the arbitrary tyrant who governs them, to their departure. Nevertheless, *that* shall be attempted. They repair to the court, and obtain an audience of Pharaoh. They appear as messengers of the Lord God of Israel, and they tell Pharaoh that it is his command that he should allow the Hebrews to go into the wilderness to the east of Egypt, for purposes connected with their religion. Pharaoh treats the command with contempt, so little does he know of the Power that rules over him. "Who is the Lord," he exclaims, "that I should obey his voice to let the people go?" And then, instead of granting the indulgence asked, he loads them with new burdens, inflicts upon them new cruelties, — such, for example, as requiring them to provide, as they best could, the straw for their bricks, which he had formerly supplied them with, yet refusing to diminish aught from the tale; so that it became exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, for them to fulfil their tasks. And this condition, instead of kindling in their breasts the spirit of freedom and the determination to assert their rights as men, only served to irritate them against Moses and Aaron. They cast the blame of their increased hardship upon them. The well-intended and divinely-directed efforts of these servants of the Lord to emancipate their enslaved brethren had the effect, primarily, of drawing closer the cords around them, — gave rise to a more rigorous discipline, — made their condition more deplorable, — and, what was worse still, drew from the Hebrews themselves bitter complaints against their deliverers. Those deliverers, however, understood their work, and were not discouraged. They had set about it, not of themselves, but in the name of God Almighty; and it must be finished. They were not discouraged, and yet they felt the need of heavenly counsel and support, and earnestly did they ask them of God. Their prayer

was answered. Fresh assurances greet their souls. They are told how to address the children of Israel, so as to still their murmurings. "Say unto them," — how lofty the language! — "Say unto them, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burden of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments; and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God." Still they are not satisfied, and they hearken not unto Moses "for anguish of spirit and for cruel bondage." Again, Moses must make an appeal to Pharaoh; but, alas! it will prove as ineffectual as the former. Nothing will move his obdurate purpose but some special demonstration of the divine power. Nay, the more he is entreated, until that demonstration reaches him, the harder will his heart become towards the poor victims of his cruel tyranny; for so is the law of God, that persistency in wrong petrifies the feeling, and renders the heart unimpressible by the sentiments of justice and humanity. In this sense, but in no other, is it true that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, or that he hardens the heart of any man. Here now, in Egypt, is a controversy between right and wrong, between freedom and slavery, between the God of Israel and the "power that worketh in the children of disobedience." The champions in this controversy are Aaron and Moses on the one side, Pharaoh and the magicians on the other. Let us observe its progress. On one side, it is demanded that the Hebrews should be set free. On the other, the demand is refused, and additional burdens are imposed. What now is to be done? This: Pharaoh is to be convinced that a God greater and mightier than any he serves commands, and will effect the release of the Hebrews. How shall he be convinced? Only — that we can see — by some manifestations of miraculous power on the part of those who claim to speak in his name. Here, then, is an occasion for miracle; and we have already seen that Moses is clothed with the power. That rod, which he brought in his hand from Midian, is the rod of God's might; and now *this is to be shown* to the conviction of Pharaoh, — not all at once, but by degrees, and to his *entire* conviction. First, the rod is cast down before Pharaoh, and becomes a serpent. This surprises him; but cannot the jugglers do the same? They are sent for, and they succeed in the deception. So his heart is hardened against Moses

and Aaron. Then the rod is stretched out over the waters of Egypt, and they become bloody, and the fish in them die, and the Egyptians cannot drink of the water. The magicians, in this case, also contrive to satisfy the king that they did a similar wonder. So his heart was still unsubdued. Other miracles follow, and other imitations of them by the jugglers, — the frogs, the lice, the flies, the murrain, sundry plagues, — until at length the magicians give up and acknowledge, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh, though greatly perplexed and troubled, though he has many misgivings, holds out still; the only sign of yielding being that he requests Moses and Aaron to entreat their God to take away the terrible scourge with which he is afflicted. Nevertheless, hard as is his heart, it shall be subdued. There are other plagues in store. There is the plague of the locusts, and the terrific darkness over the land, even darkness which might be felt; and, these failing, there is left one measure more that will search the heart of every parent in the land to the bottom, — the removal by death of the first-born of the Egyptians, while those of the Israelites are saved. These are tried in order, and the last succeeds. The heart of Pharaoh can hold out no longer. He is convinced. When he finds that there is not a house in Egypt where there is not one dead, he is melted, and he yields. "And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said. Also take your flocks and herds, as ye have said, and be gone; *and bless me also.*" How changed the tone of this tyrant! A little while ago, he treated the proposal of Moses and Aaron with contempt; now he is glad to comply with it! A little while ago, he was putting new and stronger cords upon his Hebrew slaves; now is in a hurry to unloose them, that they may depart out of his dominions! A little while ago, he would have spurned a prayer in his behalf from such men as Moses and Aaron; *now* he begs them to bless him! The work is virtually done; for Pharaoh is convinced that God is on the side of the oppressed, — that I AM, the Being Absolute and Unchangeable, is on the side of justice and mercy; and that it may prove fatal to him longer to resist that power. Therefore we say the work of Moses and Aaron is virtually accomplished.

Now, as we review the process by which divine wisdom was

pleased to effect the redemption of Israel, following the narrative of our sacred books, we may see many things that strike us as trivial, as irrelevant, as incredible, perhaps, — many things in the details which fall below the dignity of the leading facts, and the great end accomplished, — many things which may seem to us exaggerations of the truth, or crude and fanciful additions. If it should be so, let us learn to make proper and just discriminations, — learn to see the great CENTRAL FACTS, independent of all their accessories. In respect to the miracles in Egypt, and the wonders of the magicians, for instance, it is impossible for us, at this distant day, to describe them with exactness, or to know how far, if at all, the love of the marvellous or mere poetic embellishment carried the narrator beyond a literal accuracy of statement. But the *facts* that challenge our belief, resting upon grounds of moral certainty which cannot be shaken, are that Moses and Aaron were specially commissioned of God to lead the Israelites out of the house of their bondage; and that, by a series of miracles, under the immediate direction of the unchangeable Jehovah, the king of Egypt, though long obstinately refusing, was at length compelled to let them go. If any of these miracles appear to us unsuitable either to the character of God or to the end in view, that objection may be met by the single question, "Did they, in point of fact, accomplish the purpose for which they were intended?" If so, let us conclude, with the apostle, that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men."

And now, dropping for the present the thread of the narrative, look at the *abstract principle* in behalf of which these divine manifestations were made. For the sake of what grand principle did the great I AM bow the heavens of his majesty, and come down to commune with Moses in the burning bush of Horeb? Human freedom, that was the principle, — the right of man to himself, to the free use of his powers, to the enjoyment of his own religious convictions, and to the fruits of his own labor. It was the principle of *freedom* as against *tyranny* in all its forms, — the very principle for which multitudes in all the oppressed countries of Christendom are at this moment groaning, and with more or less exertion struggling. Be it, then, among our fixed convictions that the God of Israel was, and is for ever, on the side of freedom and against slavery. And as he endowed Moses and Aaron with special gifts wherewith to effect the eman-

cipation of Israel, and as we believe that he is what he said, "I AM," the Unchangeable, and also "no respecter of persons," doubt not that in all nations where men are oppressed, and especially where, as formerly in Egypt, oppression takes the odious form of slavery, he is raising up continually children to Moses and Aaron, who, inheriting their spirit, shall do *their* work. Onward, with the army of the righteous, — by a slow process it may be, — the hearts of the Pharaohs waxing hard at its presence, — but still onward moves the tabernacle of freedom, enclosing the ark of the covenant; and upon it rests, by day in cloud, by night in fire, the glory of the Lord! Gather around that tabernacle. Listen to the law as it comes interpreted to us from its holy shrine; and wherever others may be found, wherever Pharaoh and his hosts may range themselves, in the great battle that is waging all over the world for *freedom*, for *justice*, for *humanity*, and for a pure and undefiled *religion*, let us be found, with Moses and Aaron, with Jesus and with God, encouraging and helping on the great work of man's redemption!

J. W. T.

EARLY SORROW.

LIFE had been to me one summer's day. In that day, to be sure, there had been some variation; but the clouds that overcast my sky only caused the sun to appear in greater effulgence. From bereavement I had been spared; and the tear of sympathy had not lavishly been bestowed upon others' sorrows. Judge, then, of the preparation of mind with which I met the sickness and death of Myrtilla.

She was a lovely child; it was the general impression, beside the feeling of parental partiality. She had been lent us scarce two full years when the messenger of disease prostrated her, which was only a prelude to the Angel of Death. I had often sat and watched the expansion of immaturity: the first accents of speech, how fondly were they treasured, repeated, and re-echoed by the little fragile child, who seemed delighted with the transports she thus inspired! And that feeble, tottering little walk; supported by chairs, and held up by various articles of furniture; and occa-

sionally the giving way of some hold, which more generally ended in a merry laugh than the natural cry. And now she began to notice, and gradually develop the infantile mind. Sweet child! we taught her the old-fashioned but never worn-out petition of "Now I lay me down to sleep;" and years have passed since those lisping accents were repeated, yet they are as audible to me this moment as if just echoed from her voice.

When sickness came and assumed a threatening aspect, my courage forsook me. My faith (had I any?) was too weak for my reliance. I felt she must not die. Had I not a better right to the darling child than her heavenly Father? And why was she forced to suffer? Innocent and lovely, yet there she lay, racked with pain, fevered, tossing, delirious; and I was equally so, questioning the Almighty's behest!

The third day, Myrtila died. A transient calmness seized me, as I looked upon features now at rest; yet an agonizing, choking sensation followed, and I would fain go with her. But whither had *she* gone? Now the awful realities of the unseen world began to dawn upon me. In vain did my friends try to assuage my anguish by comforting assurances that "of such were the kingdom of heaven," and that Jesus especially blessed such. My sorrow was selfish: I wanted my treasure back again. For weeks I carried about me a disquieted spirit. I shrank mostly from friendly intercourse, save with those to whom I could detail the uncommon traits of my lost one's character. I could not compose myself to read: occasionally I would peruse some touching passages in the records of the evangelists, showing me how Jesus sympathized with the mourners; but, alas! I wanted a present Saviour to restore my child, as was done to the widow of Nain.

I felt myself rebellious and sinful, unreconciled and distressed; and I wandered about, performing my necessary duties, but having no heart in them. Many pious and many worldly friends visited me. One besought me, in the offices of prayer and holy submission, to yield to God's wisdom, who always appoints what is best; while others begged me, in the round of gaieties and recreations, to try and obliterate the past: but I could bear any thing better than the trial of forgetfulness.

There was no sudden change came over me which immediately subdued me, and yet there was something wholly distinct from the effacing hand of time which brought resignation into my

heart. My feelings were gradually softened, my sympathies were quickened; I felt chastened, but not destroyed. A friend of mine begged me to interpret to him my experience. I thought it over, and the first distinct beaming of God's countenance upon my stricken soul was in answer to my *first prayer*. It was a feeble utterance; it was wrung from my heart after anguished weeks, but it was sincerely uttered: "Father, lead me to understand thy dealings with me."

Years passed on, and we were gladdened by the birth of five promising children. They were healthy and vigorous; yet I never felt I had such a claim upon them as was pre-eminently attached to Myrtilla. *That* chastisement was my first sorrow; and it broke my stubborn heart. It did indeed prove a blessing in disguise. I have since often watched by the death-beds of little children, and have witnessed the convulsive agony of parental hearts; and I have longed to tell them that there *is* relief for such troubled spirits; but the words died upon my lips.

Yet I can never tell you all the benefits of my earthly sorrow. It so wonderfully checked my reliance on the perishing, and implanted such a hope in immortality, that bitter as was the cup, and reluctantly as I drained its bitter dregs, yet of the fruit of such an experience I would not be dispossessed, could that child have lived to have been to me an earthly ministering angel.

"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," says Holy Writ; yet I would not think to carry the earthly attachment to a heavenly state. I fear we become too selfish, too carnal, in our desires to reach that blissful state. I may not recognize my lost child *there*, as once *mine*; I may not know any of my dearest kindred and loved companions of this world; but I trust to God's love for *that*. If I need such helps to make my enjoyment, undoubtedly they will be furnished. What may now militate against my wishes, I may leave behind me with the perishing flesh. I would not fix my thoughts on eternity by making it consist of similar pleasures I have known here. Alas that Christian hearts should be so distrustful of a Father's fostering care!

We are too prone to feel that the friends who contributed to our enjoyment here will again rejoin us hereafter. It is a delightful thought, I well know; but who can tell how independent the disembodied soul may be of what made its essential enjoyments while here? No doubt there are hidden avenues to our future bliss

which no mortal conception has penetrated. That "redeemed host" may all be equally dear to us, employed in different missions, but all fulfilling their immortal destiny. The death of a child, or any other bereavement, the severe disappointment, the failure of earthly plans, indeed any thing that has rebuked our waywardness and inclined us to take hold of our Father's hand for support, may be a primary cause of gratitude, for which, for eternal ages, we may thankfully bless our God; but, we must remember, our souls are destined to unknown expansion. It may not be necessary in eternity that we should remember our birth-place in time, only just so far as the discipline of earth was the preparation for the enjoyment of heaven. We talk profoundly of the capabilities of the soul: alas! how little do we understand them! The thin veil which partitions us from such a hidden revelation may disclose to us such new senses, such an illimitable state of progression, as to utterly absorb all our earthly associations. Our employments may be so happily adjusted to our enlarged conceptions, that the friendships of time may seek no renewal. - But in one thing let us be confident: as we had no personal agency in furnishing the auxiliaries which promote our present peace, so beyond this state of being we shall undoubtedly be introduced to just as radiant and beautiful visions as our improvement *here* has fitted us to comprehend or enjoy *there*.

But our faith is so weak! Do we not hear sorrowing friends exclaim, under any fresh calamity, "If the departed know the sufferings of the friends they have left behind, it must embitter all their glorious state;" as if we only closed our eyes, and carried into the future the same earthly feelings with which we struggled here! No, I would say, nothing but the *impress* of this life follows us; the aggregate of good or evil is concentrated in our judgment, which the soul passes upon itself as with heavenly vision it then sees the end from the beginning. How *can* we, then, for a moment suppose that the great Author of immortality left such a flaw in his Almighty wisdom as not to guard us against every defect which our *finite minds* may suggest? I would arm thee against such a jealous distrust, my bereaved friend. Infinite Wisdom has in holy keeping all those "who have crossed the flood." See thou to thy earthly combat, and struggle on for the attainment of a more perfect character, if thou wouldst make thy sorrows blessed.

H. S. E.

THE WISDOM OF THE SON OF SIRACH.

(Continued.)

CHAP. XIII. 25.—XIV. 19.—TRUE ENJOYMENT OF LIFE.

- 25 THE heart of a man changeth his countenance,
Whether for good or for evil.
- 26 The mark of a heart at ease is a cheerful face,
And proud thoughts are discovered from vain and wicked
words.
- XIV. 1. Blessed is the man who hath not sinned with his mouth,
And has no torment from remorse for sin.
- 2 Blessed is the man whose own heart condemns him not,
And who hath not fallen from his hope.
- 3 To a miser, wealth is useless:
To what purpose are riches to him that is grudging?
- 4 He that hoards out of his living, hoards for others;
Yea, others shall revel in his wealth.
- 5 He that is hurting himself, to whom does he do good?
He has no cheer in his possessions.
- 6 Nothing is worse than a man who pinches himself;
And this is the reward of his wickedness:
- 7 Even if he do good, he does it unwittingly,
And at the last shows out his wickedness.
- 8 Wicked is he that hath a grudging eye,
Turning away his face, and overlooking men.
- 9 The eye of the covetous is never satisfied with his portion,
And wicked injustice withereth his soul.
- 10 Wicked is the eye that grudges to give bread,
And withholds it from his own table.
- 11 My child, as thou art able, do good to thyself,
And give thanks to the Lord in proportion.
- 12 Remember that death will not delay,
And nought hath been shown thee by a covenant with the
under-world.
- 13 Ere thou come to thine end, do good to thy friends;
And, as thou art able, stretch thy hand out, and give to them.

- 14 Deprive not thyself of a festive day ;
And a portion, honestly desired, let it not pass by thee.
- 15 Wilt thou not leave thine earnings to others,
Thy gains for thine heirs to draw lots?
- 16 Give and take, and rejoice thy soul ;
For in the under-world there is no seeking of pleasure.
- 17 Every living creature groweth old like a garment ;
For the covenant ever was, "Thou shalt surely die."
- 18 Like green leaves on a leafy tree, —
Some are falling, but others growing, —
Thus are the generations of flesh and blood ;
One is passing away, and another springing up.
- 19 Every thing made is going through decay,
And the workman shall pass away with his work.

CHAP. XIV. 20. — XV. 20. — WISDOM, PIETY, FREE-WILL.

- 20 Blessed is the man who is perfected in wisdom,
And hath of his understanding taken counsel ;
- 21 Pondering her ways in his heart,
And musing on her hidden truths.
- 22 Follow after in her track,
And lie in wait in her paths.
- 23 He that peepeth in at her windows
Should also hearken at her doors.
- 24 He that lodgeth near her house
Should drive his tent-pin into her walls.
- 25 He should pitch his tent near her hand,
And lodge where true good abides.
- 26 He should put his children under her shelter,
And pass the night under her branches.
- 27 He should seek shelter under her from the heat,
And lodge in her lodging of glory.
- XV. 1. Thus will he do that feareth the Lord ;
Yea, he that keeps the law shall obtain her.
- 2 And she will meet him like a mother ;
Yea, like a maiden-bride she will receive him.
- 3 She will feed him with the bread of understanding,
And water of wisdom will she give him to drink.
- 4 He shall lean upon her, and never fall ;
He shall hold to her, and never be ashamed.

- 5 Yea, she shall lift him above his neighbors,
And in the midst of the assembly open his mouth.
6 He shall find cheerfulness and garland of rejoicing,
And get him a name that will endure.
7 But thoughtless men shall never obtain her,
And they that sin shall never know her.
8 She is far away from pride;
And they that lie, learn nothing of her.
- 9 God's praise is out of place in the mouth of a sinner;
For it was not sent him from the Lord.
10 For his praise must be uttered by Wisdom,
And the Lord will prosper it.
- 11 Say not, "Through the Lord I became a rebel;"
For what he hateth, thou shalt not do.
12 Say not, "He hath caused me to err;"
For he hath no use for a sinner.
13 All that is abominable the Lord hateth;
Nor is it loved by them that fear him.
14 It was he who made man in the beginning,
And entrusted him to his own free-will.
15 If thou wilt, thou canst keep the commandments,
And please him by holding to faith.
16 He hath set before thee fire and water:
To whichever thou wilt, thou mayst stretch forth thy hand.
17 Before men are Life and Death;
And whichever they please shall be given them.
- 18 For great is the wisdom of the Lord:
Strong in his might, he seeth also all things.
19 His eyes are upon them that fear him,
And he knoweth every deed of men.
20 He hath not ordered any man to be godless,
Nor given any man leave to sin.

CHAP. XVI. 1—22.—CERTAINTY AND FEARFULNESS OF GOD'S JUDGMENTS.

- 1 Long not for a worthless multitude of children,
Nor rejoice over godless sons.
2 When thy children are multiplied, rejoice not over them,
If the fear of the Lord be not among them.

- 3 Trust not that they will live,
Nor count upon their continuing with thee;
For one such were better than a thousand,
Or even to die childless, than have ungodly children.
- 4 One man of understanding shall build up a city;
But the race of the lawless shall perish.
- 5 Many cases like this have I seen with mine eyes,
And stronger ones hath my ear heard.
- 6 For the gathering of sinners shall a fire be kindled,
And for a faithless nation wrath is burning.
- 7 It was not appeased towards the giants of old,
Who rebelled in the pride of their strength.
- 8 He restrained it not from the neighbors of Lot,
Whom he abhorred for their pride.
- 9 He withheld mercy from the nation of perdition,
Who were snatched away in their sins;
- 10 Thus also from the six hundred thousand men that could
bear arms,
Who were gathered together in self-willed folly.
- 11 Yea, if there were a single stiff-necked fellow,
It were a wonder if he escaped unpunished;
For mercy and also wrath are with Him:
He is mighty to forgive, and to pour out wrath.
- 12 As his mercy is great, so great is his chastisement:
He will judge each man according to his works.
- 13 The sinner shall not escape with his spoils,
Nor the silent hope of the godly fail.
- 14 To every deed of mercy He will give a place:
Each man shall find according to his works.
- 17 Say not, "I will hide myself from the Lord;
And who on high will remember me?
In the multitude of people I shall not be noticed;
For what is my soul in the boundless creation?"
- 18 Behold! the heaven, and the heaven of heavens,
The deep sea, and the earth, quake at his searching glance.
- 19 Both the mountains and the foundations of the earth,
When he looketh thereon, tremble and shake.
- 20 No heart can think on these things worthily;
Yea, his ways who shall comprehend?

- 21 As the stormy wind which no eye can see,
So the most of his works are in secret.
22 The works of his justice who shall declare?
Or endure? for his covenant reacheth afar.
23 The humble heart will think upon these things,
While the senseless man will falsely think them foolish.

CHAP. XVI. 24.—XVIII. 14. JEHOVAH THE INTELLIGENT CREATOR AND MORAL
GOVERNOR OF THE UNIVERSE.

- 24 Hearken to me, my son, and learn to understand,
And take heed to my words with thy heart.
25 I will bring forth instruction by measure,
And publish knowledge in accurate terms.
26 By determinate counsel of the Lord were his works from the
beginning,
And from their creation he arranged their parts.
27 He gave eternal order to his works,
And to the atoms thereof for all generations.
They neither want nor are weary,
Nor do they cease from their work.
28 Not one of them hindereth his neighbor,
Nor to eternity shall they disobey His word.
29 Afterward the Lord also looked upon the earth,
And filled it with his good gifts.
30 With every living thing hath he covered the face thereof,
And into it shall they return.
XVII. 1. The Lord formed man of the earth,
And turned him into it again.
2 He gave number and time to their days,
And gave them power over all upon earth.
3 He gave them strength in the likeness of his almighty power,
And in his own image created them.
4 He put the fear of man in all living creatures,
And made them lords of wild beast and bird.
6 Thought, and speech, and eyesight,
Hearing, and an understanding heart, he gave them.
7 With wisdom and knowledge he filled them,
And made them know good from evil.

- 8 He kept an eye over their hearts,
Showing them the greatness of his works.
- 10 And they shall praise his holy name,
To set forth the majesty of his works.
- 11 He taught them also knowledge,
And gave them the law of life for an inheritance.
- 12 He made an everlasting covenant with them,
And his laws he revealed unto them.
- 13 Their eyes beheld the majesty of his glory,
And their ears heard his glorious voice.
- 14 He said to them, Beware of all unrighteousness;
And gave them each directions concerning his neighbor.
- 15 Men's ways are ever before Him,
They cannot be hid from his eyes.
- 17 To each nation the Lord appointed a leader,
But kept Israel as his own portion.
- 19 All their works are open as the sun before him,
And his eyes are ever on their ways.
- 20 Their unjust deeds are not hidden from him;
Yea, all their sins are before the Lord.
- 22 But the good deeds of men he keeps like a signet ring,
And will guard their goodness as the apple of his eye.
- 23 Thus will the Lord rise up and reward men,
Returning their deeds upon their own heads.
- 24 Yet to the penitent he allows a return,
And calls on the fainthearted to endure.
- 25 Turn unto the Lord, and forsake thy sins;
Pray before him, and shun temptations.
- 26 Return unto the Most High, and forsake wrong-doing;
Yea, earnestly hate whatever offends him.
- 27 Who can praise the Most High in the under-world?
Who like the living can utter praises?
- 28 Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as though they were
not:
The living man in health must praise the Lord.
- 29 How great the loving-kindness of the Lord,
And his mercy unto them that return to him!

- 30 For man cannot do all things,
Since the son of man is only a mortal.
- 31 What so bright as the sun? Yet he is eclipsed.
So flesh and blood seek after evil.
- 32 He shineth above the mighty height of heaven;
But men are all earth and ashes.
- XVIII. 1. The Eternal One hath created all things imperfect:
2 The Lord alone is perfection.
- 4 To no man hath he given power to declare his works;
And who shall keep track of his wondrous deeds?
- 5 The strength of his majesty, — who shall measure it?
Or who undertake to count up his mercies?
- 6 There is no power to take away nor to add,
Nor follow the footprints of the wonders of the Lord.
- 7 When a man shall end, he will but begin;
And when he leaves off, then know his weakness.
- 8 What is man, and what is his use?
What good can he do, and also what evil?
- 9 The number of man's days is at most a hundred years.
- 10 Like a drop of water, or grain of sand from the sea,
Thus are his scant years from the days of eternity.
- 11 Therefore is the Lord longsuffering toward them,
And poureth out his mercy upon them.
- 12 He saw and knoweth how sad their end;
Therefore he is many times more ready to forgive.
- 13 The mercy of man is toward his neighbor,
But the mercy of the Lord toward all that live.
With reproof, and chastening, and teaching,
And guiding, as a shepherd his flock,
- 14 He shows mercy to those who receive his chastisement,
And that willingly bow to his judgments.
-

ALL the sects set their candidates upon an inquisition into their own orthodoxy, rather than into the truth of the gospel. Hence a thousand falsities get lodged in the memory, which would never have obtained access there, had the mind been originally directed to inquire into their truth simply, without regard to their orthodoxy. — *Selected.*

ERASMUS.

THE close of the fifteenth century witnessed the birth of one whose memory has been cherished for the valuable services which he rendered to sacred and profane literature. Erasmus,* first called Gerard, was born on the 15th of October, in the year 1467, sixteen years prior to Luther, the great Reformer. He knew no legitimate parents; and, although he was often disturbed with the reproaches of his adversaries, he defended himself by emphatically remarking that his illegitimacy was not *his* crime. His father appears to have been a man of much acquired knowledge; and, by his witty and festive disposition, gained the appellation of the facetious Gerard. The occupation of Gerard was that of a copyist; for, though the art of printing had been discovered some years before this time, printed books were yet so scarce that the transcription of manuscripts furnished many with employment. In this way he acquired most of his knowledge, and even gained considerable reputation as a classical scholar. Of the mother of Erasmus we are not much informed. His biographers, however, admit that from the time of his birth her conduct was irreproachable. Her love for him never abated. As long as she lived, she watched his progress with no little anxiety and apprehension.

The early years of Erasmus exhibit no striking proofs of genius. Indeed, so far at first from discovering a taste for literature or an aptitude for its acquisition, he was thought a dull and stupid boy. But in his case, as in many others, it needed only an opportunity to arouse his latent faculties, in order to predict his future career. His schoolmasters, we are told, held him forth as an example of what perseverance would achieve, when the mind is properly exercised. Devoting a few years to music, which was then cultivated in no part of the world so much as in the Netherlands, he was at length placed at a school in Davenport, in the province of Utrecht. The school, which was then the most celebrated, was under the direction of secular priests, who lived in a community, but took no vows. Under their instruction, Erasmus

* The word *Erasmus* is derived from the Greek, and may be translated "the Amiable."

made commendable progress. So striking was his proficiency in his studies, that one of his teachers was led to exclaim, "Hail to thy genius, young man! Proceed as thou hast begun: thou wilt before long reach the highest pinnacle of literature." In short, during his sojourn at this school, he won, by his diligence and deportment, the approbation of all his instructors. And well he might, when we consider his literary attainments at so early a period of life. For, at the age of twelve, he knew by heart all the works of Horace and Terence; and in logic and philosophy, usually taught in the schools, he had no rival. Notwithstanding the high esteem in which Erasmus was held, the severe discipline of the school tended to dampen his efforts, and suspend in a measure his ardor for study; and in his works he repeatedly inveighs against "cruel masters, and the sufferings to which pupils under them are subjected." In addition to his studies, he found ample opportunity for writing. His themes evinced an extraordinary mind. The invention, the style, and the various beauties which his compositions displayed, assured his teachers, that, if he persevered in his diligence, he would become a great man.

Thus far we have followed Erasmus in his literary pursuits. But here they do not end. When he left the school we have mentioned, his future course seemed uncertain, on account of the death of his affectionate parents; and when we see the literary eminence to which he afterwards attained, we cannot but regret that his parents, who appeared to cherish him tenderly, did not live to witness it. However, they did not leave him to himself alone. His father appointed a guardian, to whom he entrusted his whole property, to be expended for the wants of Erasmus. The first step which his guardian took was to place him in a convent at Stein. But it was not long before he grew weary of the monotony of a conventual life: "its fish diets," we are told, "its long fasts, its interruptions of sleep, disagreed with him; and, absolutely devoted to study as he was, it grieved him that so long a proportion of every twenty-four hours of his life was spent in spiritual exercises and religious ceremonials." Wearied of this mode of living, he sought the earliest opportunity to quit the convent, and be released from the monastic observances of the order. On application to the Bishop of Utrecht, within whose diocese the monastery of Stein was situated, by the Bishop of Cambray,

Erasmus obtained permission to leave the convent, and shortly after repaired to Cambray, with the promise of accompanying the bishop on a journey to Rome. Desirous of knowledge, Erasmus acceded to the proposals which the prelate made. But these proposals were never realized; and Erasmus, in a fit of despair, resolved at once to apply to the bishop under whose care he was placed, to provide him the means for spending some time in Paris. The prelate, pleased with the intentions of Erasmus, provided for his support by settling upon him a pension. Erasmus reached Paris in 1496, in his twenty-ninth year. The pension, however, was not regularly paid; and consequently, Erasmus, like Dante, experienced how bitter was the bread of others, and how painful it was to tread their stairs.

The university of Paris was at this time one of the most celebrated seats of learning. Here the theologian and physician resorted to avail themselves of its rare privileges, while the lawyer and man of science found the advantages of the University of Bologna — second only to that of Paris — best fitted to advance their peculiar studies. The University, aside from literary attractions, had but few charms in comparison with those of latter days. Its exterior, bearing marks of age, would have led the unsuspecting observer to have supposed it little else than a dungeon; while its interior, on account of its many inconveniences, was disgusting in the extreme. As the great wish of Erasmus was to perfect himself in theology, his favorite study, he was naturally led to Paris. The aspect of things did not impede his progress. His literary endowments penetrated every cloud that encompassed him: he saw enough that was gloomy and discouraging; but his cheerful disposition, his indomitable perseverance, and his eager thirst for knowledge, converted apparent evils into real pleasures. Although he went to Paris with the intention of pursuing his theological studies, it appears that he devoted but little attention to them. He was almost wholly engaged in perfecting himself in the classical studies, for which, in his youth, he had evinced so great aptitude; and particularly was he desirous to acquire a thorough knowledge of the Greek language, which he considered a requisite foundation for the acquirement of the Latin tongue. "The Latins," he was accustomed to say, "had only narrow rivulets: the Greeks had pure and copious rivers, and their streams were of gold." Besides, he thought that to

attempt to acquire a perfect knowledge of theology, or to understand the New Testament in the original, without perusing the Greek Fathers, was the height of folly. To the study of the Greek language he therefore addicted himself with ardor and perseverance, and acquired a knowledge which, considering his means and advantages, few have attained. Some of his biographers have gone so far as to say that he devoted twenty years exclusively to this study, thereby acquainting himself with all the principal authors of Rome and Greece. However this may be, his attainments in sacred and profane philology evinced an indefatigable industry and a profound research.

During the sojourn of Erasmus in Paris, we find that his pecuniary means were extremely limited. For his support he had to depend mostly on his writings, and his remunerations were so small that they scarcely met the demands of his literary wants. He had now arrived at that age of life when it was necessary for him to fix his mind upon some lucrative employment, and at the same time congenial to his feelings. His inclination still tended to theology, in spite of his love for classical pursuits. Unsettled as he was in his future course, and desirous to see more of the world than he already had, Erasmus made three visits to England. Here he was always fortunate to meet friends; for no sooner would he arrive than men of rank and learning would seek his acquaintance. By them, too, he was supplied with the means necessary to defray his travelling expenses. Sometimes he was obliged to make application to his friends for pecuniary assistance; but only would he when his distress made him importunate. In his letters he alludes to his extreme poverty; and there he relates of "a person who, seeing his friend poor and sick, put some money under his pillow while he was asleep." "When," he adds, "I used to read this in the days of my youth, I was extremely struck with the modesty of one, and the generosity of the other. But since you, my friend, talk of begging without shame, who, I beseech you, can be more submissive and blameless than myself, who reside in England upon the foot of a *public beggar*?" By his repeated visits to England, he won the admiration of all who were so fortunate as to know him. He was not so wholly absorbed in his studies as not to mingle occasionally with the world, to observe the manners and customs of the people; and the more he thus familiarly associated himself with them, the more

he admired, and in turn was admired by, them. In short, if Erasmus can be said to have had a home in all his wanderings, it must have been in England; for here the greater part of his life was spent.

Having thus hastily glanced at the earlier periods in the life of Erasmus, — his humble birth, the loss of parents at an early age, his life in the convent at Stein, his eminent success as a classical scholar, his journeys to England, and the hardships which he suffered from necessity, — we will, in bringing this imperfect sketch of his life and character to a close, mention the most prominent and interesting features of his closing years.

Erasmus, at the age of fifty, had attained the height of his reputation: his celebrity as a man of profound wisdom was unequalled, and no one was so much courted by the great or the learned. As a proof of the esteem in which he was held, we will quote the language of one of his admirers when he resided in Italy: — "Great as is the reputation of Erasmus, his merit is far beyond it. Never have the Cisalpines produced his equal in learning: Italy herself has no one to compare with him. When he speaks, what erudition! what taste! what style! what memory! It is not a man, it is the muse of Athens, whom you hear; he has penetrated the inmost recesses of philosophy; he perfectly understands Plato, Aristotle, and all the ancient philosophers."

Erasmus had as yet no fixed home. In respect to the charges so frequently preferred against him of wandering from one country to another, he declares that he never changes his residence, unless his health or some literary object compelled him to such migrations. "Wherever I have been," writes Erasmus to one of his accusers, "I have lived in a manner which has obtained for me the favor and esteem of the wise and good. There is not a country which does not attract me to her: Spain, France, England, and Italy invite me to them." But now, as age enfeebled his body, and rendered travelling a task, he determined to seek a quiet mode of life, and devote the remainder of his days to writing for publication. Accordingly, after having enriched his mind with the materials which observation and experience in foreign countries had furnished, he finally settled at Basle, in the fifty-second year of his life. At this time his circumstances were comparatively easy: he describes himself as pos-

sessing a yearly income of three hundred ducats, exclusively of presents frequently made him, and the profits which he derived from his publications. "I have," he says, "ceased to complain. I have enough to maintain myself comfortably, and something to spare for an indigent friend. All I seek is quietude and ease, that I may devote my life to literary pursuits."

The publications of Erasmus consisted of translations of ancient authors, and original compositions: among the last we may reckon the learned and elegant prefaces with which he often accompanied both his editions and translations. But that which has immortalized his name, and placed him among the greatest benefactors to sacred and profane literature, is his edition and Latin version of the New Testament. An edition of the Greek original had long been wanted. To Erasmus belongs the glory of having supplied a want which was felt by the learned of every nation. The accuracy of his translation can be best judged from his own words: "I collated many Greek manuscript copies. I adopted that version which I thought the best. I made my translation as faithful, and at the same time as simple, as I could; I always endeavored to avoid whatever was obscure or equivocal. I did not, in every instance, render the original word for word; but I constantly endeavored not to depart from its sense." This edition of the Greek Testament he accompanied with a new version of it in Latin. His first plan was to insert the Vulgate* translation, marking such portions as he thought incorrect: but at length he was induced, more out of deference to the wishes of his friends than his own, to frame a version wholly new; still, however, conforming to the Vulgate version, so far as it enabled him to perfect his own plan.

There is sufficient reason to suppose, that Erasmus, in his religious sentiments, continued a Catholic even to the close of his life. In his intercourse with Luther, it is true, he became somewhat imbued with his doctrines. But, in all his writings, he repeatedly and explicitly disclaimed every thing opposed to the faith or doctrines of the Catholic church. Besides, the establishment of the Protestant religion occasioned his removal from

* The Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible is not that to which St. Augustine gave the preference over other versions, on account of its greater literal adherence to the text, but is the edition which was made by St. Jerome, and is acknowledged by the Catholic church to be authentic.

Bâsle, until he was obliged to return on account of the publication of his writings.

Disease began now to prey upon his body. He was conscious that his remaining days were few; for he announced to his friends that he had advanced to that age when he must soon expect to leave them. His labors for the advancement of sacred and profane literature, to which his whole life had been devoted, were not checked by physical enfeeblement. His mind, on the contrary, seemed strengthened; for, during the last two years of his life, he composed and edited as much as he ever had before in the same space of time.

The death of Erasmus, in July, 1536, at the age of 69, was a subject of general concern throughout the Christian world. At Bâsle he was honored by a public mourning, and both Protestants and Catholics showed their regard for his memory by visiting and viewing his mortal remains for the last time. He was buried in the Catholic church at Bâsle, near the choir, in a chapel which had been dedicated to the Virgin Mother of God. At the close of his life, he exhibited truly Christian piety and resignation. With these words on his lips he expired: "O Lord! end my sufferings! O Lord! have compassion upon me." v.

ORANGEMEN.

LETTER FROM TORONTO.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — In the year 1836, the Westminster Review, in speaking of Orange Associations, said, "The English society is dead; the Irish is abandoned by all who gave it either weight or respectability." The Reviewer forgot that England always bequeathes her antipathies to her colonies, and congratulated himself on a speedy cessation of hostilities. So in truth did I, and very much surprised I was, when, on entering the House of Assembly soon after my arrival, I found the members discussing the repeal of an Act disallowing the formation of Orange processions. A great deal of temper was lost on both sides, and so vivid partisanship manifested, that I could not realize my distance from the original seat of these discussions. I seemed to be transported to the House of Commons, to the stormy debates of 1836; and,

from force of contrast alone, I listened to the indignant eloquence of Hume, and saw the Orangemen "condemned by all parties, with loud execration from one side of the House, and silent contempt from the other." It soon became evident that the Act would be repealed; and the strongest reason offered for it was that no magistrate could be found to enforce it. I soon had an opportunity to see that this was true; for, on the eve of the 12th of July, the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne, a procession of about a hundred children, decked out with orange ribbons, and carrying oranges impaled, straggled up the street on which we live. On the next morning, the gay shouts of my own little ones drew me to the window, and I found the head of a long procession approaching. It was preceded by a man upon horseback, who wore a long gown, like a minister's, of bright orange silk, adorned with sleeves of black velvet. He was riding a sorry horse, at a desperate rate; and the orange cloak streamed like a banner behind him. I have not yet found out whether this person was the Grand Master of the Lodge; but I presume so. Then came, at proper intervals, ten splendid banners, most of them representing King William on horseback, and inscribed with various mottoes, commemorating the battles of Derry and the Boyne in 1690. There were oranges on poles, — stems of orange lilies, — orange collars, rosettes, and streamers; and the whole procession had a powerful, triumphant air, which must have been inexpressibly annoying to the Irish population, who stood looking on. I had been warned not to go out that day; but I was obliged to mail a letter, and I was not sorry to go quietly through the crowd. No anti-slavery rescue or anticipated election ever heated so much "black blood" in the States as this procession in the city of Toronto. Women of the lower classes thronged the side-walks of King-street, and stimulated the passions of their children against each other. A little boy was standing on one corner of the street, with a gay cockade on his shoulder, when an Irish lad, three times his size, tore it off, and threw it in the gutter. A gentleman, who had evidently no Orange predilections, but was disgusted by this aggressive insolence, collared the lad. Men and boys closed round them; and there ensued a general scuffle, from which I was glad to retreat. As I went, I saw women bending, half-dressed, from their chamber-windows, with flaming faces and brutal oaths, toss-

ing cockades to the men below, and challenging them not to lose them.

You will see why I have brought these facts under your notice, when I add that, on Sunday the 18th of July, the leading clergymen of the place preached long and loud on the subject of Orange Lodges, — the Catholic and Presbyterian against, and the Episcopalian in favor of them. Perhaps you will like to know what sort of a thing an Orange sermon can be. It needs to be strong, for it seeks to sustain all the tottering pillars of the state. It lifts up a voice in behalf of old abuses, and seeks to broaden the line which separates the aristocracy from the mass. It advocates the existence of rectories and clergy reserves. Early last fall, a meeting was held at St. Lawrence Hall to consider the latter subject, of which I hope you will allow me, in some future letter, to speak more at length; for it is one which every intelligent, religious man in the States should understand. This meeting was intended to be free; but the Conservatives had called to their help the Orangemen from the country, and every attempt to speak on the liberal side was silenced in a riotous and offensive manner. Many of the agitators on both sides were clergymen; and, before the friends of the free church could go safely home, it became necessary to call out the military. Some days ago, a call upon the friends of protection, or a high British duty on bread-stuffs, for the protection of Canada wheat, appeared in our papers. In the meantime, large numbers of an exciting circular, impressed with the "arms" of the Orangemen, were privately distributed. After seeing one of these, wise men anticipated "a gagged meeting" or broken heads; and the demonstration which took place last night was in truth an unrighteous and absurd affair.

On the 17th of March, the Irishmen, with their green cockades, celebrated St. Patrick's day. The procession — hats garlanded by branches of the beautiful shamrock, shoulders tied by green scarfs, and banners flying — went early in the day to the Cathedral, where the Archbishop and the Comte de Charbounel, our Bishop of Toronto, celebrated high mass. From thence they scattered to their various homes, and closed the evening with a public supper and a dance. There were many children in this procession; and both men and children carried banners, bearing, if nothing else, the divine words of Peace, Purity, Love. All looked very poor; and, as I gazed somewhat sadly

upon them, a little boy drew near. Bareheaded, and wearing that most niggardly of garments on a cold winter's day, a ragged brown linen tunic, he paddled along through the half-melted snow with his little bare feet, carrying a small white banner. An unlucky breeze filled it out as he passed; and I saw, in plain black letters, the word "Plenty." I could not keep back the tears which started to my eyes. I looked at his thin blue cheeks, and fingers stiff with cold. I saw, as by a supernatural vision, all that his countrymen had endured, and would endure, in seeking a home in the new land. Quick as thought, there came before my eyes the narrow lanes of Dublin, heaped up with living death, — the desolate estates depopulated alike by famine and disease, the terrific waste of "potato bog," and the sunken heart of the nation. Then came, far off in time, a vision of the little Phœnician ship, that, on its way to the British coast for tin, was stranded on the southern shore of that green isle. High civilization, heroic poesy, skill in the arts and oriental fancy, warm love of man, and generous commercial enterprise, came in that little bark to Ireland, and impregnated the race that sprang from her loins. After centuries of oppression and misgovernment, it was hard to believe that I saw in that ragged, frozen-looking child, gazing hopefully up to the white banner he bore, the image of his beautiful native land.

Nothing is more dear to an American than the strong feeling of nationality which dwells in the hearts of his countrymen. If an intelligent foreigner goes to the United States with the intention of remaining, in six months his interests will compel him to call himself an American. It is not so here; and it was not long after I crossed the line that I found out there was "no Canada." We talk of Canadians, in the United States; and, if we mean French Canadians, there is some propriety in the term; for the French inhabitants of Lower Canada, by their strong sense of nationality alone, retain their political influence, and unite to drag the wheels of state. In Upper Canada, men are Irish, Scotch, or English, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, or Methodists, Orangemen or Catholics; but they are never Canadians. Many honest men deplore the corruption of the Government, a corruption which finds its primal source in Downing-street, and seems so inseparable from colonial existence that their hearts are sick of hope. Very few adults are to be found who were born in

Upper Canada; and, when I hear from what country a citizen came, or to what church he belongs, I can usually tell how he will act with regard to a given class of subjects; but his *creed* will give no faith in his *character*. The open "chiselling," as it is called in the House of Assembly, the coercion exercised by ministerial influence, filled me with dismay and disgust. It was droll to see the English, Irish, and Scotch members standing doggedly apart, and, thinking alike, refuse to unite to save a measure or a principle that each one of them declared to be dear to him. No one of them was great enough to forget the petty advantage claimed by his district, in the general good of Canada. On the other hand, I grew sad to see the French Canadians, comprising some men of promising eloquence and scholarship, following the whistle of their leader with the docility of sheep. I discerned among them, however, the dawning of independent action on two or three important questions. Would that there were the same promise of a healthy union among the Upper Canadians! I attended the debates faithfully through the last session, and I heard but one speech embodying great principles, or that gave me the impression of a man who could not be moved. That was from Mr. Papineau, whose personal influence seems to carry with it, like that of John Quincy Adams, a weight of solid honesty, and a deep conviction of absolute truth. He spoke but once during the session. He gave his votes with the unutterable sadness of despair. Nevertheless, his life bequeathed to Canada will do more for her than votes or speeches.

The Unitarian Church has a great work to do for the country. It is already expected in Toronto that its members will act as they *think right*, and be in all matters faithful to the higher law. Our controversial lectures are ended, and they have brought us several valuable accessions. They have roused apathy, brought back stray friends, softened prejudice, and gratified the faithful few. We have far more to contend against than our friends in Montreal, who had always among their number men of great wealth and influence, and who, since their church was built, have had a pleasant sabbath-home, better situated than any in the city. As for us, our people are firm and true, of a sort that it gladdens my heart to dwell among; but they are poor, and their efforts in all directions require an amount of capital hard to raise. Our church is an old, uncomfortable wooden building, in

a street removed from public thoroughfares. It discourages all but very self-denying worshippers, and keeps aloof all proselytes from the gayer world. A luxurious friend from Montreal hinted to us, a little while ago, that he should be obliged to go to some other church half the day, to *rest his eyes!* The time will come when our little society will have to ask aid on this account from its eastern and transatlantic friends. For the present, they carefully abstain from incurring the smallest debt, or running any risk that may interfere with their duty to their minister. It is impossible to think of the changes that have taken place here during the last year, without a joyful hope too deep for words.

We are constantly winning new members, and rousing new inquiries. Our books and tracts are eagerly sought; and the Sunday-school, which six months ago numbered only four teachers and fourteen scholars, now numbers nine teachers and forty pupils. The census, which reported 130 Unitarians in Toronto two years ago, reports 201 this spring; and last, not least, the Episcopalian Rector of the Cathedral, Chaplain to the Queen's Bishop John Toronto, has thought fit to notice us in his Easter sermon. Very cautiously he did it, too; for he was a little afraid to let his people know that such a heresy was rising in their midst. A Methodist revival also has been stirring the town; and our influence and success have of late become so manifest that the talented preacher found it necessary to warn his hearers night after night against the errors of our way, and besought God to deliver his people from "Socinianism," as if the very name carried with it the reality as well as the sound of sin.

C. W. H. D.

MODERN NOTION OF SIN. — The Methodists of the past time, as we have said, found the consciences of men greatly benumbed, indeed, or paralyzed, by sensuality and earthly passions; yet not generally recusant of the preacher's appeal. Not so the masses of men at this time; for the wide currency that has been given to various schemes of physical metaphysics has, in a positive sense, *perverted* the moral consciousness of multitudes, and has furnished the minds that have been thus perverted with the plausible sophisms of a spurious philosophy, — a miserable quackery, by aid of which men persuade themselves, and each other, that sin is not *sin*, but misfortune. — *Isaac Taylor.*

THE REJECTION OF CHRIST BY THE JEWS.

A SERMON BY REV. CHARLES A. FARLEY.

JOHN v. 43: "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: had I come in my own name, ye would have received me."

IN reading the Gospels, it is exceedingly interesting to watch the gradual disclosure of our Saviour's public character and intentions. From first to last, there was great division among his countrymen as to both;—some saying, "He is a good man;" others, "He deceiveth the people." This was natural enough; for, though at the time of his coming there was a universal expectation that the predictions of their prophets were about to be accomplished in the person of a remarkable man, yet there were few whose expectations he perfectly satisfied. They did not want a man who came in the name of the Great God and Father of all to teach a true life, but one who should come in his own name, and set up for himself. They wished, not a moral, but a civil revolution. As *men* they were profoundly impressed by his preaching, his miracles, and his life. They could not help saying, "Never man spake like this man;" "Whence hath this man this wisdom?" "When the Messiah cometh, will he do greater works than this man doeth?" But as *Jews* their minds were pre-occupied with ideas utterly hostile to his reception as *their* Messiah. They desired not a man who could teach divine truth, but a man who could fight. They cared not to hear about meekness and purity and peace and good-will. They wanted to hear the call to arms, and be led to victory by a soldier; to see Rome conquered, and Judea free. "Give us power! Restore the kingdom to Israel!" This is what they asked, and all that they asked. Our Saviour would do nothing of the kind, and they would not receive him.

Some parts of his Sermon on the Mount, with which he began his public preaching, and which is a sublime epitome of Christianity, must have excited in many minds great indignation; for they never forgot Mount Sinai, and that they had received the law by the disposition of angels. Moses their lawgiver, and the splendid line of their patriarchs, prophets, and kings, have

always stirred the patriotism of this proud people. They resented a word against their temple, and believed that God had established with them an everlasting covenant that the promise was to them, and them only, for ever. There were those who waited their time to bring up the words of that sermon in judgment against him; and one of their weightiest charges afterwards was speaking disrespectfully of their law.

At first, however, the impressions of the common people seem to have been in his favor. The contrast was broad between the pompous priests, with their embroidered robes and phylacteries, and air of extreme wisdom and sanctity, and the unpretending simplicity of Jesus. It was perhaps gratifying to the people to find one of their own class with such remarkable gifts; and they might have had some dim hope of giving to the nation the looked-for Messiah. Their history told them that more than one of their greatest men was of humble birth; that David, from whose line he came, was once a poor shepherd-boy, and fed his father's flocks in Bethlehem.

However this may be, Jesus made no sudden disclosure of his character or plans; for this would have been fatal to the success of his mission. He seems to be aware of the necessity of feeling his way, without needlessly offending the popular prejudices, till every thing was ripe for the transmission of his gospel to other hands. Hence his frequent injunctions of silence upon those he cured, and upon his chosen disciples. He now and then asks the twelve, "Whom do men say that I am?" They answer, "John the Baptist; but some say Elias, and others one of the prophets." And then, as if to have perfect assurance that those who were to be the heralds of his gospel had true conceptions of his character, he asks, "And whom say *ye* that I am?" And Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And, though he charged them that they should tell no man, because the time had not yet come, yet his fervently blessing Peter, and the remarkable words, "Flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven," show that he was intensely anxious that this conviction should be rooted in the minds of his apostles, before he should speak openly at Jerusalem.

Still this conduct, while it accomplished his purposes, was only laying up more certainly the fearful vengeance of the nation. The time was fast coming when the very circumstances which

stayed awhile the rage of the people were to be turned against him in full force.

But he had made up his mind to die. All he wished was to lay so strong a foundation for his religion that no earthly power could shake it after his death. Having conciliated the common people for a time, he now steadfastly sets his face towards Jerusalem, and goes up to confront the Sanhedrim, — the supreme tribunal of his nation, — and witness a good confession. He was now to show that there was no unworthy fear or selfishness in his hitherto not committing himself; that it was not the craft of an impostor, but the suggestions of heavenly wisdom. The Scribes and Pharisees, the most powerful party in the nation, were already his enemies. *They* would not receive him; for their pride had been wounded, and they considered themselves insulted by his terrible rebukes. Their influence with the people was threatened with a complete overthrow by the miracles and eloquence of a Jewish peasant. They were without a particle of principle, and scrupled at no means to render him odious, and compass his death. They watched every step with eyes sharpened by malice, and were constantly busy in poisoning the minds of a fickle and corrupt people. With the usual course of small minds, they were perpetually finding fault, and fastening upon trifles. They find fault with the company he keeps, without asking what his motives might be for keeping it. "Why does your Master eat with publicans and sinners?" seeing he professes such immaculate purity. And then they hold him up as "a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber." If he works a miracle, and the people exclaim, "It was never so seen in Israel," they are ready with an answer, "He casteth out devils by the prince of devils." When, preferring mercy to sacrifice, he cures the withered hand on the sabbath, they cry out, Profanation! and "are filled with madness." Still, his miracles being all benevolent, and palpable realities which no man could gainsay, it was impossible to do away their effect by sneers, and ascribing them to diabolical agency. It seemed strange to many that devils should so contradict their own natures. "These are not the words of a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" And our Saviour did in fact refute the accusation with precisely this reasoning.

But it was not so easy to explain satisfactorily his words. He was an uncompromising teacher of truth and righteousness. Few

minds are strong enough to bear an exposure of their besetting sins; but our Lord openly and unsparingly rebuked spiritual wickedness in high places. While he allowed all that was due to ritual observances, he assigned them the lowest place; declared them not only useless, but extremely pernicious, when they interfered with inward righteousness; and hence he poured contempt upon the outward righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, — told them that their long prayers, and rigorous fasts, and sorrowful faces, and scrupulous payment of tithes, were worthless substitutes for justice, mercy, and truth; that a man's spirit was every thing; that there was as much sin in a bad thought as a bad action. Rather than sin, he bade them pluck out a right eye, or cut off a right hand. This was unpardonable insult to priestly formalists, who occupied high spiritual trusts, but whose lives were flagrantly immoral, and who taught the traditions of men for the commandments of God.

Moreover, the heavenly morality of Christ was offensive to all classes. "Love your enemies," he says to a nation smarting under almost intolerable wrongs, as mere provincial subjects of hateful heathen. "Be meek, be merciful, be pure, be perfect," was strange language to a people so corrupt that their own historian declares, that, "if they had not been conquered by the Romans, God would have destroyed them by an earthquake or a deluge." Those whose office it was to instruct them in every virtue had none themselves. There was the Pharisee, wrapped in his pride and his hypocrisy; there was the Sadducee, with no faith in a future existence, and living in luxurious sensuality. How could they receive such a Messiah? Yet they were obstinately attached to all the outside of religion, to their temple-worship and imposing ritual. They took fire at once, if a rite was neglected, or a holy day. The rulers were delighted to see Jesus offending in these points, and stirred up the people, upon whose sympathy here they could rely. Accordingly, they follow him from place to place, with their small criticisms; now asking signs from heaven, and now trying "to entangle him in his talk." They must have seen his triumphal entry into Jerusalem with indescribable vexation, when even the children shouted hosannas to the Son of David.

Still it is possible that our Saviour might have retained his hold upon the affections of the people, if he had not disappointed

their most cherished anticipations. After the Sermon on the Mount, it was impossible to regard him as an ordinary man. They thronged his path wherever he went. The Roman and the Jew alike besought him to go out of his way, and heal their friends. They witnessed more astonishing miracles. "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" They saw him give sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, life to the dead, by a touch or a word. They must have been impressed by the authority of his manner; and they evidently expect to see him throw off all disguise, and unequivocally declare himself their king. They grow more and more restive under his answers. They knew that joining him was to peril their own lives. Hence we find them crowding round him with the impatient question, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." That they were greatly troubled by his replies, and had serious misgivings lest their confidence was misplaced, is clear from the words, "This is a hard saying: who can hear it?" and from the fact that "many of his disciples forsook him, and fled." Nothing is more terrible, as all revolutions show, than a reaction of the popular mind. There are no bitterer enemies than those who were once friends. This reaction was now fast taking place; and, the moment the adherents of Jesus lost confidence in him, they were ready to rush upon him with violence. The very men who cheered him with hosannas soon follow him with curses.

It is painful to think how the feelings of Jesus were tried by the alienation and faithlessness of his followers, of even his chosen friends. Those who continued with him unchanged were mostly from the peaceable portion of the people, and of that sex who have nothing to do with public affairs. It would be strange if there were not many hearts in Judea whose love to Jesus was unalterable. It was not in human nature for all who had experienced his kindness to turn against him. They could not forget how he had come into their houses, and healed their sorrows and their sicknesses. But what could *they* do to stay a fierce and merciless mob, who had been for months growing disaffected, and begun to cry out against him as an impostor? And thus many a Jewish mother, whose attachment to Jesus was strong, waited in silence, in her home, the issue of the popular wrath. What a change, in a few days, from the entrance of Jesus into

Jerusalem to his meeting with the twelve in that upper chamber on the night of the Passover! That night, Jerusalem was thronged with an immense concourse of Jews from all parts of the country. The splendid rejoicings of their greatest national festival contrast fearfully with the burdened hearts of that small company in that upper chamber. Alas for the heart of that being who was "among them, but not of them," prepared to sacrifice his Master for thirty pieces of silver!

The morning sun rose on a day of terror; a day which, while the earth lasts, will never be forgotten. Jesus was surprised at early dawn by the Jewish officers, and carried up to Pilate's judgment-hall. Thence he is sent to Herod, who, after heartlessly insulting him, remands him with contempt to Pilate. The time-serving high-priest yields one whom he knows to be innocent to the importunities and violence of a mob; and He who "was without sin," after witnessing the treachery of Judas, the denial of Peter, and the desertion of all his chosen friends except the faithful John, after seeing an infamous robber released in preference to him, after "cruel mockings and scourgings," and amid the appalling shouts, "Crucify him! crucify him!" is led to Calvary, fainting under the weight of his own cross, and executed between common malefactors, amidst the brutal jeers of the populace at "the King of the Jews."

No wonder that all nature was convulsed, that darkness hung over the land, that the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom, and the dead rose from their graves. No wonder that the centurion cried out, "This was a righteous man," and that "all the people who came to that sight smote their breasts, and returned." It is a grateful thought, that Jesus, in his last hours, saw the attachment of his best friends, — of his mother, of him who leaned upon his bosom, and of the sisters of Lazarus.

In looking at this rejection of Christ by the Jews, we feel no disposition to revile this people as they have been reviled. They had fallen upon evil times; and our Saviour's last prayer was for their forgiveness, since they knew not what they did. They have been overtaken by a fearful retribution, as their overthrow by Titus, and their whole subsequent history, show. They have been hunted in almost every corner of the earth like dogs, and have been for ages a hissing and a by-word to the nations. "What crime," asks Bossuet, "what atrocity, more heinous than

idolatry, has brought on you a punishment that even your repeated idolatries did not bring upon you?" Our Lord knew, that, to establish his religion, his own blood, and that of many a Christian apostle, must be poured out like water. But his countrymen will see more clearly every day, that, instead of being their enemy, he was their best friend. They will see, that, if the Jewish nation were the first, so they were the last, depositories of divine truth. They will see that a *Jew*, greater than Abraham or Moses or Elias, and mightier than John, was the author of a religion perfect in itself, and destined to regenerate the world. They will see that "they who were but of yesterday have filled not merely the cities, islands, towns, and boroughs, the camp, the senate, and the forum," of the Roman empire, as Pliny wrote to Trajan of the early Christians, but have filled all the empires of the world; that the star which conducted the wise men of the East to an infant's cradle was but the Morning Star to usher in the Sun of Righteousness; and that all who, in obedience to this religion, shall teach others to follow Christ, shall be planted like stars around him, and shine for ever and ever.

THE ANNUNCIATION.

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE.

O HOLY Maid! in fearful rapture kneeling,
 Thrilled with vast wonder and a solemn joy,
 While the bright messenger, God's will revealing,
 Foretells thee mother of the wondrous Boy;

Of him who, at thy tender bosom clinging,
 Shall drink pure life-blood from that sacred spring;
 Yet ever hear the heavenly anthems ringing,
 And tune his soul to strains that angels sing;

Who shall be as a man in earthly seeming,
 With men shall walk and labor day by day;
 But, like the eastern sky with morning gleaming,
 O'erfill and overflow with heaven's ray.

Say, kneeling Virgin, canst thou read with clearness
 The mighty meaning of that word divine? —
 Canst see with eyes undazzled the bright nearness
 Of the broad light that shall around thee shine?

A God about thee in thy daily duties,
 Making thy house the very porch of heaven;
 The upper glories, the celestial beauties,
 Hallowing thy common life with their sweet leaven.

These shall be thine alone, O blessed Mother!
 Yet wider shall the circling billow spread;
 In every man his heart shall own a brother,
 And he shall lead us to the sacred Head.

Letter of God! in him shall stand recorded
 The gospel of a never-ending love;
 In him shall that great secret all be worded
 Which long to utter voiceless nature strove.

In him shall shine all prophecy's fulfilling,
 And hallowed myth to holiest truth shall turn;
 The spirit's flame, undimmed by earthly chilling,
 In him shall stainless rise and ever burn.

World's hope, heaven's joy, he bears with patient loving
 The hate of Jews, the scoffing Gentile's scorn;
 And endless ages hail with glad approving
 The Saviour-child, of God and Woman born.

F.

PULPIT TALENTS. — So it was, that, when Wesley and his three or four educated colleagues held to the few and great principles of the gospel by the intentness of their minds and the fervent simplicity of their zeal, and while the lay preachers, by the paucity of their ideas and the slenderness of their knowledge, kept to the same narrow path, the *result* towards the people was to prevent the vast disparity between the two classes of teachers from becoming painfully apparent. This is seen, by contrast, everywhere in communions from which evangelical fervor has departed; for there, all the vast difference between one preacher and another, in natural ability and in furniture, is fully felt, and is accurately measured by practised hearers. Yet let the energy of heavenly truth return to such bodies, and these disparities would become less conspicuous, or would almost cease to be regarded. — *Isaac Taylor.*

THE DREAM.

THERE stood a child at the foot of a steep and lofty precipice, into which were cut rudely, and at long intervals, steps that led upward. And upon the summit were seen dimly the golden gates of the celestial city, through which sometimes the music of the eternal life was borne down to waiting souls. And the child stood there trembling, but longing, and saw how some went on with calm strength before her, and passed with vigorous hearts, though with bleeding feet and colorless faces, up the straight but terrible way, to the summit, and entered in at the golden gates. And these bore great crosses upon their breasts, and a glorious light streamed from them, and made a shining way far down into the valley.

With an ever-renewed, but an impatient and ineffectual striving, did the child seek to follow in their footsteps. And whenever she fell back, torn and wounded by the sharp and jagged rocks, an angel with white wings and downcast eyes, and with a face calm but sorrowful, received her in her arms, and rested her head upon her bosom. But the child turned not her eyes upon the ministering spirit, nor heeded its gentle offices; and the angel spoke no word, nor sought to withhold her from the renewal of the struggle, but ever, with folded arms, awaited quietly the sad but sure return.

After many failures, the child sank back despairing; and for the first time, looking into the calm eyes that watched over her, "O gentle angel!" she said, "I will strive no more: I am not *worthy* to enter into the celestial city." Then the angel smiled softly, and her voice was sweet and calm as she answered, "It is only the *few* who are great and strong that can pass by direct and rapid steps to the heavenly home, and leave a shining way behind them. But seest thou yonder narrow path which looks dark in contrast with this glorious light? If thou wilt take this cross upon thy breast, and wilt lean on me, I will go with thee all the way; and it will lead thee as surely, though slowly, to the portals of the divine life." And, as the angel spoke, she held towards the child a small cross; but she turned away her head, and said, "It is *too light*, it cannot fit me for the heavenly life." "Take

it near to thee," said the angel, "that thou mayst see it more clearly." And, when the child had taken it in her hands, she saw how it was thickly studded with sharp points, which the shadows had before concealed. Then she smiled joyfully, and pressed it closely to her breast, so that drops of blood flowed from it, and stained her white garments; but she smiled only the more gladly.

And I saw how the child, leaning on the breast of the angel, went slowly onward in the winding pathway. And, when she stumbled over the stones which lay therein, she stooped down, and removed them softly out of the way; and, when the thorns wounded her, she uprooted them, and cast them on one side. And with the flowers she dealt gently; lifting those that had been bruised and trodden under foot, and watering those that were parched by heat, and parting aside the branches which had overshadowed some too heavily. And she broke none rudely, and left always some remaining, that new seeds might be sown therefrom. Then said the angel, "Why dost thou stop by the way so often, stooping to so much toil, seeing that thou canst not retrace thy steps, and the same thorns may not wound thee twice?"

"Not for myself," said the child gently, "have I done this, but for those that shall come after me."

Then the angel smiled; and from the cross upon the pilgrim's breast a soft light fell upon the path behind them, and made the way clearer.

So they journeyed long; and I saw how the child's garments, which had been so white and shining when she stood first at the foot of the precipice, were now torn and sullied; yet only the more clearly did the soul's light shine through the rents and tatters of its worn-out covering. And once, as they walked, it came to be almost the close of the day; and the child said, "Now it is almost night; and I am glad, for I long to lie down in the gentle arms of sleep, that I may wake refreshed for a renewal of toil."

Then said the angel, "There shall be no more night for thee;" and, as she spoke, they came to a sudden turn, and, when they had passed it, lo! the golden gates were before them. And the child stood still, and meekly bowed her head in thanksgiving. And "Oh welcome, thou divine life!" she said, "for which I have so long thirsted. Not so quickly, or by such a quiet pathway, did I think to attain unto thee." And, as she passed

through the now open gates, she turned and said, "Who sent thee to me, O beloved guide? and what art thou called, that I may know thee again in heaven?"

And the angel said: "I shall be often with thee in the clearer world: the Father has placed me at the beginning of life. I am the child of love, and am called among men PATIENCE."

A.

LINES.

"Deep suffering, to the true heart, reveals the depths of its capacities, and not unfrequently through this door does the river of life flow into the soul."

'Twas wondrous fair, that garden-plot:
How rich and light the soil!
Delicious fruit and sweetest flower
Repaid the gardener's toil;
For toil he must, else spreading roots
Would sure destruction bring:
From that warm earth which bore the flower
The rankest weed would spring.

Here bloomed the rose, and hearts-ease there
Raised up its cheerful face;
And, swaying in the gentle wind,
The lily had a place.
Up sprung the sweet forget-me-not
Upon its graceful stem,
And, close beside the passion-flower,
The Star of Bethlehem.

Its clusters rich, the clambering vine
Hung o'er the shady bowers;
And fruits, such as the soil could grow,
Were ripening 'mong the flowers.
The myrtle and the cedar-tree
Cast most delightful shade;
And, on the harp-strings of the pine,
Æolus softly played.

From bloom to blight! from life to death!
A change came o'er the scene:
The summer sun grew red and hot,
His glance was deadly keen;

There came at night no gentle dew,
 There fell no summer showers ;
 The fruits were drooping on their stems,
 And dying were the flowers.

A workman came, and in his hands
 Rude implements he bore,
 Which, wielded by his stalwart arm,
 The quiet earth uptore.
 With purpose firm he wrought his task ;
 He met the flinty rock ;
 It shivered into atoms there ;
 Earth trembled in the shock.

One master-stroke ! and lo ! there gushed
 The crystal water forth,
 And evermore a fountain flowed,
 Refreshing all its earth.
 Deep was its source, while high in air
 It with the sunshine played,
 And, falling back among the flowers,
 The sweetest music made.

L.

THE CHRISTIAN REPOSITORY.

THE energy and talent of those liberal Christians that have planted a Theological School at Meadville deserve an organ, and have produced one. Two numbers of their new periodical, a Monthly furnished at \$2 a year, lie before us, and are in all respects worthy of their parentage. The work is edited by Professors STEBBINS and FOLSOM, and J. E. CHURCH, with the special assistance of Professors MILLARD, HOSMER, and CHADWICK, and I. N. WALTER, A. A. LIVERMORE, A. CRAIG, A. H. CONANT, and E. EDMUNDS. It is designed especially for western circulation ; but, as graduates of the Meadville School are often sought as ministers of New England churches, so, we have no doubt, this fresh and vigorous journal will be read and prized in all parts of the country.

The editors say : "The Christian Connection have long felt the need of such an organ, in which they can discuss the great doctrines and duties of Christianity from their point of view, at greater length and with more thoroughness than they can do in a religious newspaper. The Unitarians, of the West especially, also need some publication which shall be issued in the West, and partake of a liberal spirit. To meet these wants, this periodical is started. It will discuss all subjects of practical piety and Christian doctrine in a free, yet courteous manner, so that the spirit in which its articles are written shall edify the reader, if its doctrines should not all of them win the assent of the understanding."